

**15 APRIL 1996**



**Personnel**

**SPECIAL OBSERVANCES**

**COMPLIANCE WITH THIS PUBLICATION IS MANDATORY**

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This instruction aligns with AFRD 36-27, *Social Actions*, and implements AFI 36-2701, *Social Actions Program*. It provides guidance for the celebration of special observances at Robins Air Force Base (RAFB). It is designed to promote savings of materiel, financial, and personnel resources where possible. It establishes procedures for the total workforce to participate in installation level activities in support of special observances, with substance and lasting visibility of the EEO and special emphasis programs. It applies to all military and civilian personnel assigned or attached to Warner Robins Air Logistics Center (WR-ALC), the 78th Air Base Wing (78 ABW), and all tenant organizations.

**SUMMARY OF REVISIONS:** This is the initial publication of RAFBI 36-2701. It clarifies the policy on special observances; updates requirements and responsibilities for funding and budget, host directorate, and office of primary responsibility. It deletes Social Actions office requirements; establishes a new RAFB American Heritage observance, and lists specific duties of key committees and subcommittees.

## **1. POLICY.**

**1.1. National Level.** It is Department of Defense (DOD) guidance (DOD Directive 1440.1), and Air Force policy to celebrate events which significantly affect minorities, women and people with disabilities, and that support the Civilian EEO program. Events proclaimed by executive orders will be given maximum support by each echelon of command.

**1.2. Local Level.** Individual directorates are to refrain from conducting independent activities for ethnic observances. All events will be coordinated by the observance committee.

## 2. PURPOSE.

2.1. The purpose of a special observance is to foster teamwork and awareness throughout the diverse military and civilian workforce. The observances are designed to educate personnel on the background, social values and accomplishments of individuals or groups.

## 3. SCOPE OF OPERATIONS .

3.1. In carrying out the spirit and intent of this instruction, the active involvement of every functional manager is required. A permanent office of primary responsibility (OPR) within the Civilian Personnel Division (78 SPTG/DPC), will be appointed to oversee all observances. A host directorate will be appointed by the WR-ALC Commander (WR-ALC/CC) for each observance (attachment 2). These observances are normally confined to RAFB. To succeed, these events need the active support of military and civilian personnel assigned to the base.

## 4. ESTABLISHED SPECIAL OBSERVANCES . The following special observances are covered by this instruction:

**4.1. National Hispanic Heritage Week .** This observance began in 1968 as a result of Public Law 90-498 and a presidential proclamation, and was originally celebrated during the third week of September, to coincide with Mexican Independence Day, and those of other Latin American Nations. The national observance has since been expanded to cover 15 September thru 15 October. The local observance week may occur any time during this period.

**4.2. Black History Week .** This observance was established by Dr. Carter G. Woodson in 1926 to recognize contributions of black Americans. When possible, Black History Week is observed during the second week in February to encompass the birth dates of Abraham Lincoln (12 February) and Frederick Douglass (15 February). When this is not possible, the week encompassing the latter's birth date is normally designated as Black History Week.

**4.3. Asian-Pacific American Heritage Week .** This week was authorized by Presidential Proclamation Number 4727, 27 February 1980. Special events are observed during the week encompassing 7 May in recognition of the arrival of the first Japanese immigrants to America in 1843. Additionally, the driving of the golden spike on May 8, 1868 is recognized as representative of the contributions of Chinese-Americans in the building of this country's transcontinental railroad.

**4.4. American Heritage Week .** Headquarters Air Force implemented American Heritage Week in 1981. The concept and adoption of this multi-cultural/ethnic event is designed to recognize American's collective heritage with one annual celebration to be scheduled around mission priorities. Air Force suggests that the event take place several days before the Fourth of July. This time frame permits a week of planned activities culminated by a celebration of America's birthday.

**4.5. Native American Heritage Week .** November 22-28 was proclaimed as American-Indian Week in recognition of unique and essential contributions made by this group of Americans to the United States. The observance has now been expanded to the entire month of November. The local observance week may occur anytime during this period.

**4.6. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr, Memorial .** This observance takes place in January of each year, centered around the national holiday observed on the third Monday of each year. The Friday prior to the national holiday is normally designated as observance at the Base Chapel at Robins AFB. WR-ALC base chaplain is host for these annual observances.

**4.7. National Disability Employment Awareness Week.** Nationally observed during the month of October of each year. The local observance may take place during any one week of the month with emphasis on eradicating misconceptions which are major barriers to employment of persons with disabilities.

**4.8. Womens Equality Day.** This observance is in recognition of the Suffrage Amendment (19th), dated 26 Aug 1920, which gave women the right to vote. The local observance may occur anytime during the week of 26 August. The WR-ALC Federal Women's Program Committee will be the host for this observance.

Any other observance deemed appropriate by the Center Commander that has been approved at the national level may be celebrated in the manner set forth in this instruction. These observances should have a demonstrated interest/support.

**4.9. Special Observance Goals and Objectives.** These special observances are annual events. The objective of these special observances is to foster teamwork and awareness at Robins AFB. When the group being recognized is the only one participating the purpose is lost. It's important to attract mass interest and participation. To enhance the value of such events, conglomerate involvement by the installation community is essential. Active command support and leadership and thorough planning are fundamental elements of success.

## **5. FUNDING AND BUDGET GUIDANCE .**

**5.1. Policy.** Adequate funding is an essential element in the success or failure of special observances programs. Appropriated funds for ethnic observances are authorized by AFR 172-1, volume I, para. 4-12 based on available funds and approval by the installation commander. This section provides guidance for the conduct of fund raising activities and procedures for the management of funds.

5.1.1. The host directorate liaison officer should contact the base budget office and the OPR (78th SPTG/DPCS) to determine available funds/resources prior to planning any activities. This should be accomplished as early as possible to facilitate the planning process. The budget estimate should be submitted before planning certain events, not after. Funds allocated for special observances should not be spent on other unrelated programs without resource-advisor coordination and approval by the installation commander. All activities planned by the observance committees will be financed with appropriated funds based on usage rates and per capita number of personnel included in a specific heritage event basis.

5.1.2. Honorariums and speaking fees from O&M type funds are authorized in accordance with AFR 172-1, Volume 1, paragraph 4-40a. Each observance committee will submit a proposed budget to the OPR (78th SPTG/DPCS), including any proposed fund raising activities, for review and approval.

5.1.3. Plans for fund raising activities must also be coordinated with and approved by the Services Division and the host directorate sponsoring the observance.

5.1.4. The focus of any fund raising activities should be within the theme of reinvestment in the community. Examples are: Raising money for local scholarships, educational programs, essay contests, etc..

5.1.5. Unless authorized by the Center Commander, fund-raising events will be limited to the installation.

5.1.6. Should appropriated funds not be available, fund raising activities will be limited to five per observance.

## **5.2. Funds Management.**

5.2.1. The planning subcommittee must coordinate with the finance subcommittee to make sure planned activities do not exceed operating budget. Host directorate assumes financial responsibility for any overages.

5.2.2. Finance subcommittee keeps a ledger showing income and outflow of cash.

5.2.3. Release of funds require signature of the host liaison (or designee) in addition to the base OPR.

5.2.4. At the conclusion of the celebration all remaining funds obtained through fund-raisers will be placed in a financial account for the next years celebration. The base OPR will oversee this account.

## **6. ORGANIZATION.**

**6.1. Observance Committee (OC).** OCs are base established and self-sustaining committees. These OCs are integral parts of the military service or federal entities.

**6.2. Types of OCs.** OCs are established and operated to fulfill the needs and interests of DoD families under the direction of the Center Commander (or designated representative). OCs have the ability to generate limited funds to support their direct expenses in sponsoring functions. The following paragraphs list some examples of different types of OCs and an explanation of their function.

**6.2.1. Steering Committee .** These individuals plan the special observances, track progress, and cross-feed information (program innovations, achievements, problem solutions, and lessons learned). They also assure that invitations to special guests, e.g., community leaders and other dignitaries, are drafted for the Center Commander's signature. This committee is also the focal point for all budgeting requirements unless a finance subcommittee is appointed. Pertinent responsibilities include: Reviewing plans of the event to determine financial requirements; verification of funding needs with subcommittee chairpersons; coordinating Air Force Form 9 requirements (preparation and timeliness of contracts) and maintaining a financial ledger to balance the budget and account for all expenditures.

**6.2.2. Program Subcommittees .** These committees develop a schedule of planned activities, provide accompanying cost estimates; help secure local resources/facilities; obtain guest speakers, films and/or tape recordings; arrange for community exhibits and displays; duplicate program leaflets; and prepare draft invitations and "thank you" letters for the Center Commander's signature as appropriate. Some suggested subcommittees are: Luncheon, Banquet, Education, Hospitality, Publicity, etc..

**6.2.3. NOTE :** All program committees and subcommittees should prepare an after action report, itemizing all expenses and payments, problems encountered, and lessons learned. These reports should be condensed and consolidated into the project officers after action report or attached to the host directorate liaison officer's after action report. The liaison officer's final report should be forwarded to the OPR NLT thirty days after the observance/event which formally signals the disbanding of all committees and subcommittees related to the specific observance.

## 7. RESPONSIBILITIES.

**7.1. Center Commander.** Once the WR-ALC/CC determines that a special observance will make a positive contribution to the base populace, he/she authorizes the establishment of an OC through the appointment of a host directorate for the celebration. The Commander may withdraw his/her authorization if the OC prejudices or discredits the United States government, conflicts with national government activities, or for any other reasonable or just cause.

**7.2. Office of Primary Responsibility (OPR).** The OPR (Civilian Personnel) acts on behalf of the Center Commander to ensure quality programs are presented and provides authoritative guidance and recommendations to the host director and those assigned to plan/implement programs. The OPR advises the OC and ensures proper coordination (WR-ALC/JA, 78 SPTG/SV, and WR-ALC/PA) of all events/functions. The OPR is the repository for policy, records, and historical data.

**7.3. Host Directorate .** The host directorate will appoint a liaison and co-liaison representative to plan, coordinate, and implement a quality program. The host directorate will prepare a letter for the center commander's signature which tasks each directorate and tenant unit to officially appoint an individual and an alternate to represent its unit during the official observance period and attend the executive committee meetings. A sample appointment letter is provided at attachment 1. Appointed individuals from each directorate will query their respective organization to determine if there are any additional willing committee participants to sit on working groups. The appointed individual will then submit a list of prospective participants within the directorate to the director who will approve or disapprove participants as he/she determines appropriate. Supervisors should be provided a copy of the list of participants and should monitor committee meetings and work in accordance with mission requirements. The liaison and co-liaison of the host directorate as well as the directorate participants should possess the following prerequisites:

- 7.3.1. Desire to participate
- 7.3.2. Empathy
- 7.3.3. Objectivity
- 7.3.4. Perceptiveness
- 7.3.5. Maturity
- 7.3.6. Commitment
- 7.3.7. Availability
- 7.3.8. Understanding of diversity
- 7.3.9. Knowledge of the subject matter
- 7.3.10. Effective communication skills

## 8. PUBLICITY

8.1. According to AFR 190-1, Public Affairs (PA) is the primary means for supporting Air Force missions with the informed "public sentiment..." The mission of Public Affairs is to advise and assist commanders in communicating Air Force messages to Air Force people and the American public. Regarding ethnic observances, Public Affairs will provide publicity for both external and internal media including various newspaper articles, television coverage, radio spots and the like. PA will be

able to assist with press releases and media escort duty. PA, Judge Advocate (JA), and Services Division (SV) personnel will work closely with the directorate liaison, but will not be required to attend all observance committee meetings. The Public Affairs Office (WR-ALC/PA), Staff Judge Advocate.

## **9. PROTOCOL.**

9.1. Protocol is the observance of the order of precedence at all functions where the Center Commander, Directors, Deputies and Staff Officers or their representatives are present. The same is true in seating the aforementioned individuals and guests of a public or private organization at luncheons, banquets and formal functions sponsored or held by WR-ALC. All questions regarding proper protocol for any function must be forwarded to the WR-ALC Protocol Office (WR-ALC/CCX).

## **10. CIVILIAN PERSONNEL.**

10.1. The following (para. 10.2) is a summary of an Air Force Civilian Personnel Policy Division Advisory Letter, subject: Policy guidance on duties for Special Emphasis Program Manager (SEPMs), dated 10 May 1994.

**10.2. Roles of Special Emphasis Program (SEP) Managers in Observances .** Special Observances should not be a SEP initiative. Those activities should be conducted as base-wide activities, planned and conducted by an ad hoc committee composed of military members and civilian employees. SEPMs should participate as members of the ad hoc committee, assisting in the development and implementation of special activities that affect minorities, women and disabled persons.

**10.3. Duty Time to Plan Observance .** Planning official base functions is a part of an employee's regular duty (other duties as assigned). Recommend planning meetings be limited to a reasonable amount of time (30 minutes to 1-1/2 hours). However, the primary responsibility for observing time limits rests with the host organization Liaison Officer.

**10.4. Duty Time to Attend Observance .** See 78 SPTG/DPC letter dated 10 March 1995, subject: Policy for Excused Absences.

JACK D. WARD, Colonel, USAF  
Commander, 78th Air Base Wing

**Attachment 1**

**SAMPLE LETTER**

MEMORANDUM FOR ALL DIRECTORATES AND TENANT UNITS FROM: WR-ALC/CC SUB-  
JECT: Appointment of \_\_\_\_\_ Heritage Observance Representative.

1. Request you appoint an individual from your organization to perform duties as a member of the base \_\_\_\_\_ Heritage Observance Committee for the period \_\_\_\_\_ through \_\_\_\_\_.
2. The appointed individual should exhibit an interest in the \_\_\_\_\_ heritage and be willing to devote time and effort to ensuring the base heritage observance is a successful one. This person will be expected to dedicate approximately \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ hours of official government time in carrying out these duties.
3. Send the designated person's name, office symbol and phone number to \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_.

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RONDAL H. SMITH, Major General, USAF  
Commander

**Attachment 2****SUGGESTIONS FOR PLANNING****SPECIAL OBSERVANCES**

**A2.1.** The two most important elements to ensure a successful program ceremony are planning and coordinating. Planning in detail and coordinating with command and support officers are critical from the very first discussion of a program through the closing of the historical file.

**A2.2.** This Observance Guide includes material to assist in the planning and conduct of special observances. The tools in this planning guide are provided as examples which may provide useful to the Liaison Officer and the Observance Committees.

**A2.3.** It is suggested that planners make use of all locally available resources in planning a special observance. Members of the staff, library personnel, and people in the local community may be anxious to assist in the planning and/or conduct of an observance. Also, some of the special interest groups or their families may want to help in some way without actually participating in the ceremony.

**A2.4.** As with all programs of a professional nature conducted on or with the assistance of a military installation, the planning process must be conducted in a meticulous manner, and preferably with the use of milestones and detailed checklist. The following sample checklist should be adjusted to fit needs and situations so that the resulting program is appropriate for the military and civilian audience and the setting.

**A2.5.** One should never lose sight of the purpose for observances. We observe to learn. The emphasis is therefore education.



## Attachment 3

## PROJECT OFFICERS COORDINATION CHECKLIST

**Note for the newly-appointed project officers:** This checklist is, of necessity, general in nature. Nevertheless, it is based on extensive experience in the planning and conduct of a wide variety of special observances. It is expected that you and your committee will need to tailor this checklist to meet local requirements, to conform with command guidance, and to be consistent with command or installation standing operating procedures. Items in the following checklist are not necessarily accomplished sequentially.

## CHECKLIST ITEMS

**A3.1.** Contact appropriate installation/local organizations (e.g., Public Affairs; Services; Commanders Action Group (CAG); Command section; Staff Chaplain, etc) to compare calendar of events for installation/command activities during the time frame being considered for this observance. Inform staff members of your preliminary plans and look for interface with other local activities planned for the observance (either on the installation or in the local civilian community).

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**A3.2.** Determine availability of facilities to accommodate the program(s). Reserve facilities on a tentative basis. Consider back-up facilities.

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**A3.3.** Verbally apprise your commander, director, or appropriate supervisor of your general plan. Obtain essential planning guidance from this discussion.

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**A3.4.** Compose a rough draft of each of the following documents and retain a file copy for final report:

A3.4.1. Publicity release announcing the event.

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A3.4.2. Special observance program outline.

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A3.4.3. List of possible guest speakers, including name, title, address, and background information.

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A3.4.4. Brief description of desire and/or planned events(s) (e.g., auditorium ceremony, exhibits, luncheon with speaker, panel, audio-visual presentation, etc.).

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A3.4.5. Structure of desired planning committee showing proposed members and their organizations of assignment (e.g., Personnel, Public Affairs, Equal Opportunity/Social Actions, Chaplain, Security Police, etc.).

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A3.4.6. Estimated funds (proposed budget) required for program. Coordinate with base OPR.

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A3.4.7. Introductory message i.e., first draft of welcoming remarks.

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A3.4.8. Letter to proposed key point speaker.

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A3.4.9. Memo or letter to the Commander, summarizing what you are planning.

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A3.5. Present the proposal to your commander (or the person to whom you will be reporting). Obtain additional guidance.

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A3.6. Upon approval by the commander/responsible official, proceed with the program by scheduling a Planning Committee Meeting. This meeting should result in the assignment of tasks to committee members. Keep minutes of these meetings and send copies promptly to committee members.

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A3.7. Ensure Planning Committee members cover all aspects of the observance. It is recommended that detailed checklist be developed. Retain copies of all locally developed checklist. Many of the following categories may be applicable:

A3.7.1. Funding requirements and established coordination's and/or approvals.

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A3.7.2. Desired advertising of the program(s) including any special invitations to be sent.

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A3.7.3. Facility acquisition/confirmation; verify in detail what is needed (e.g., flags in stands, chairs for stage, lectern, restrooms, etc.).

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A3.7.4. Arrange for Color/Honor Guard.

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A3.7.5. Initial contact with keynote speaker.

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A3.7.6. Written invitation to speaker.

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A3.7.7. Musical support (including coordination with the Color Guard).

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A3.7.8. Audio-visual materials for program.

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A3.7.9. Audio-visual support.

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A3.7.10. Photographic support.

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A3.7.11. Signing (i.e., interpreter support for hearing impaired guest).

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A3.7.12. Special support for disabled guests.

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A3.7.13. Exhibit materials.

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A3.7.14. Reception arrangements (including refreshments, is required).

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A3.7.15. Luncheon/panel arrangements.

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A3.7.16. Program design and printing arrangements (including time constraints).

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A3.7.17. Biography and photograph of speaker(s) and other special guests.

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A3.7.18. Transportation requirements (to include meeting of speakers and/or special guests).